Teen team sports participation benefits adult mental health

May 29 2019

(HealthDay)—Among individuals exposed to adverse childhood

experiences (ACEs), team sports participation in adolescence is associated with better adult mental health, according to a study published online May 28 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Molly C. Easterlin, M.D., from the University of California in Los Angeles, and colleagues examined the correlation between team sports participation in grades 7 to 12 (wave 1) and diagnosis of depression and/or anxiety and current depressive symptoms at ages 24 to 32 years (wave 4) among individuals exposed to ACEs.

The researchers found that 49.3 percent of the 9,668 individuals included in the study reported one or more ACEs and 21.3 percent reported two or more ACEs. Team sports participation during adolescence was significantly associated with reduced odds of receiving a diagnosis of depression (unadjusted rate, 16.8 versus 22.0 percent; propensity score-weighted [PSW] adjusted odds ratio [aOR], 0.76; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.59 to 0.97) or anxiety (11.8 versus 16.8 percent; PSW aOR, 0.70; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.56 to 0.89) and reduced odds of having current depressive symptoms (21.9 versus 27.5 percent; PSW aOR, 0.85; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.71 to 1.01). No significant differences were seen in the correlations between team sports participation and mental health by sex.

"Pediatricians might consider recommending team sports participation for patients with ACEs and parents might consider enrolling their children with ACEs in team sports," the authors write.

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Citation: Teen team sports participation benefits adult mental health (2019, May 29) retrieved 19 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-05-teen-team-sports-benefits-adult.html

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